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SAR-BQ 2005 strengthens links between coastal rescue teams

Teams respond to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

SAREX 2005 helps improve SAR in Canada

Laser Underwater Camera takes SAR to new depths

SAR SCENE

The Canadian Search and Rescue Magazine Online

Fall-Winter 2005 Vol. 15, #2

Highlights from SARSCENE 2005

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SAR*SCENE* online

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Submissions are welcome and should be sent to the Editor.

442 Squadron receives Heroes and Rescue Award

The Justice Institute of British Columbia recently recognized the members of 442 Squadron for "heroic action in a time of crisis."

442 Squadron, along with the Vancouver Urban SAR Team and the B.C. SAR Association, received the Heroes and Rescue Award in late October.

Although the award is usually presented to provincial organizations, Jack McGee, President of the Institute, said it was appropriate "to recognize 442 Squadron for the substantial contribution to the safety and security of the people of British Columbia."

So far this year, the squadron has been tasked for 196 missions and five major searches.

"People often take search and rescue for granted and we wanted to acknowledge the hard work of the squadron crews and the difference they have made," explained Mr. McGee. "This year's award recipients represent a powerful search and rescue package, teams that work closely together on behalf of all British Columbians."

Star of Courage awarded to two Gander SAR Techs

Two SAR Techs from 103 Squadron in Gander will receive the Star of Courage for a daring rescue in September 2004 where Master Corporal Norman Penny (then a Corporal) and Sergeant Derek Rogers saved four fishermen from drowning after their vessel capsized near Cape Bonavista, Newfoundland and Labrador.

During a storm in the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan, the rescuers faced 10-metre waves, heavy rain and gale-force winds while they descended to the life raft to retrieve the victims. In addition to bad weather, the SAR Techs faced other problems: a hoist failure, injuries from being tossed around by high winds and powerful waves, and near drownings from being forced under water by panicked victims.

Through their tireless efforts, Sgt. Rogers and MCpl. Penny saved four of the six fishermen.

Canadian Forces School of Search and Rescue receives Back and Bevington Award

Dedicated to the training of every air force SAR Tech, the Canadian Forces School of Search and Rescue (CFSSAR), was chosen as this year's recipient of the Back and Bevington Award.

The trophy is awarded annually to honour a significant contribution to air safety in British Columbia and was bestowed upon CFSSAR by the British Columbia Aviation Council at the Silver Wing Awards Banquet in Whistler, B.C.

The CFSSAR was singled out for its outstanding achievement in its training mission. The B.C. Aviation Council said "the Canadian Forces School of Search and Rescue provides outstanding contribution and leadership in developing safety and rescue techniques for all Canadian Forces SAR Techs, which provides paramedics, divers and land and sea survival specialists as an elite element of the Canadian Air Force."

Service Canada to licence Pleasure Craft Operators on behalf of Transport Canada

An agreement has been signed recently to allow Service Canada to licence pleasure craft operators across Canada on behalf of Transport Canada.

In a news release, Transport Canada Minister Jean-C. Lapierre said, "We are joining forces with Service Canada to increase the number of locations where Canadians can apply for pleasure craft licences and to provide search and rescue and law enforcement agencies with 24 hours a day, seven days a week access to licence information during emergencies."

There are now 320 centres where licences can be issued at no cost.

A pleasure craft licence, which must be placed on the side of the vessel, helps law enforcement and search and rescue organizations identify the owner of the craft.

B.C.'s SAR Association sponsors Avalanche Rescue Resource Directory

The British Columbia Search and Rescue Association will again sponsor the Canadian Avalanche Association's Rescue Resource Directory. The directory lists agencies and personnel related to search and rescue, avalanche rescue, training and education.

It is distributed across B.C. and to parts of Alberta, including to SAR teams, the RCMP, the Parks Canada warden service, various provincial and federal government ministries and professional members of the Canadian Avalanche Association.

New CCG station is fully equipped

A new building for the Canadian Coast Guard SAR crews in Sambro, Nova Scotia, has living quarters and office space. The facility provides SAR teams with communications and technical support equipment needed to effectively carry out their duties.

Opened in September by the Honourable Geoff Regan, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Sambro Search and Rescue Station now provides a home and base of operations for two four-member full-time crews who stand ready for SAR operations 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Volunteer survey gives evidence of trends

Results of the search and rescue volunteer study conducted by the National Search and Rescue Secretariat last spring, show common concerns across SAR teams such as loss of membership, recruiting difficulties and insufficient funding for equipment and training.

Aimed at the team leader, the survey looked at recruitment, training and retention. The National Search and Rescue Secretariat undertook this survey to help support the volunteer community, an essential component of the National SAR Program.

However, with only 36 responses from eight provinces, the results are not statistically valid to be able to draw meaningful conclusions. Nonetheless, the respondents provided a detailed and heartfelt account of the problems facing their groups which will help guide further work in examining this important sector.

No tax break for volunteers

A recent report by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance has recommended no further consideration be given to amending Bill C-273, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act (deduction for volunteer emergency services).

The Bill was delayed because of various unresolved questions, including the definition of the term "volunteer emergency service" and uncertainty over which groups would be included: auxiliary police officers, the RCMP Auxiliary, SAR volunteers, paramedic and Coast Guard services, among others.

To read more about the decision, visit the Parliament website at **www.parl.gc.ca/committee/CommitteePublication.aspx?SourceID=135652**

Changes in the U.S. Hug-a-Tree Program

Developed by Ab Taylor in the 1980s, the Hug-a-Tree program is undergoing some changes in the United States. The program and its materials need to be updated and the National Association for SAR (NASAR) has taken on this responsibility.

To facilitate the modernization of the program, NASAR has established a committee that will coordinate, monitor and support current presentations while working to improve the program, materials and support system. To learn more about the transformation, contact the committee at **hugatree@nasar.org**.

Call for ideas

Hosted by the Canadian Coast Guard College, the sixth annual International Association for Safety and Survival Training Meeting and International Conference will focus on 'self rescue.'

The event will be on May 22, 2006, at the College in Sydney, Nova Scotia. To submit an idea or for more information, contact Myles Ross at **rossmx@dfo-mpo.gc.ca** or 902-564-3660.

Online avalanche training program now available

A new Avalanche First Responder training program is now available online through the Canadian Avalanche Association (CAA).

SAR personnel can learn how to search for avalanche victims effectively, and how to reduce the risks to their team mates and themselves while conducting winter SAR missions.

Funded by the SAR New Initiatives Fund (RCMP 2/04) and sponsored by the RCMP, the training program is available in English and will be available in French in mid-January, 2006. It has been downloaded in over 30 countries since October 2005.

"We're thrilled with the reception the website has received," said project manager and CAA Operations Manager, Ian Tomm. "There's obviously a real hunger for this information. We've made it easy to access, educational, and interactive,

and that seems to have really struck a chord with the backcountry users of all levels."

The program teaches people how to reduce the likelihood of being caught in an avalanche and what to do if a companion is buried in one.

To access the training program, go to **http://access.jibc.bc.ca/avalancheFirstResponse/index.htm**

Nunavut develops a community-based approach to SAR

Search and rescue volunteers in Nunavut gathered at a three-day conference to discuss way to strengthen SAR in their communities.

Held in early December in Iqaluit, the conference lectures and training focused on improving the knowledge and planning capabilities of community SAR leaders. The RCMP, Canadian Forces, Canadian Coast Guard and representatives from 24 of the 25 communities that were present (the 25th representative withdrew) recommended strategies to decrease the number of SAR incidents across Nunavut. Significant progress was made in two key areas:

- Training requirements for effective SAR response in the North
- Key messages and targets in the development of a prevention strategy

Emergency Management Services of Nunavut will compile information gathered from the conference and develop a strategy to address these issues.

In addition to information, each community was equipped with satellite phones, GPS, binoculars and first aid kits to enhance SAR capabilities in their communities.

A snowmobile safety poster unveiled by the Minister at the conference will be distributed to communities for posting at gas outlets, hamlet offices, RCMP detachments and on community announcement boards. The community radio will broadcast similar messages to remind people about their safety on the land and water.

PEOPLE

Ground

RCMP **Staff Sergeant Mike Frizzell** was appointed as National SAR Coordinator in the summer of 2005. He has more than 15 years in the RCMP, having served primarily in "E" division, British Columbia, where he was the local and provincial SAR liaison for several years. S/Sgt. Frizzell replaces **Sgt. Arch Thompson**, who became the Executive Assistant to the RCMP's Assistant Commissioner of Community, Contract and Aboriginal Policing.

Two RCMP "F" Division Commander Officer's Certificates of Appreciation Awards were given to **Robert Smith**, President of the Search and Rescue Saskatchewan Association of Volunteers (SARSAV), and to **Chris Rule**, a long-time member of SARSAV and a founding member of KOSAR — the La Ronge GSAR Association.

Marine

Derek Smith, who had been on a two-year assignment with the National SAR Secretariat, returned to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in the United Kingdom in October.

Joe Murphy, a Canadian Coast Guard Officer and Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary Co-ordinator, received a Commissioner's Commendation to recognize his long and distinguished career, and in particular, his work for the 2005 International SAR Competition.

In celebration of the Canadian Coast Guard College's 40th Anniversary, an expanded college library was named in honour of former Canadian Coast Guard Commissioner **John Adams**.

George Da Pont has been named the Acting Commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard and **Kate Fawkes** resumes her position of Deputy Commissioner.

Daniel Haché has moved from Manager of the Office of Boating Safety at Transport Canada to an assignment as the Acting Director of Strategic Information.

Jon Churchill has returned from retirement to his former position as Manager of the Office of Boating Safety.

Dan Lemon, Chief of the United States Coast Guard's SAR Coordination Division, is retiring in early January 2006.

Air

LCol. Konyk has taken over as the Commanding Officer of 424 Squadron at 8 Wing Trenton. Lt. Col. Konyk replaced **LCol. Lalumiere** in late August 2005.

Daniel Lévesque and his staff from the Cospas-Sarsat Secretariat have settled into their offices in Montreal after moving from London, England this past fall. ■

Highlights from SARSCENE 2005

A PACKED ROOM FOR A VERY COOL PRESENTATION ON HYPOTHERMIA; A HEATED PANEL DISCUSSION ON POLICE WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS, AND A VERY WET DAY FOR THE OUTDOOR EVENTS — THESE ARE AMONG THE MEMORABLE MOMENTS FROM SARSCENE 2005.

Weather played a major role

The Meteorological Service of Canada turned out for three presentations on prediction tools and hurricanes, timely subjects that are critical to SAR. Their booth in the trade show offered delegates a first-hand look at some of the newest online technologies and a chance to gain a deeper understanding of the role they play in SAR mitigation.

From presentations about major emergencies, such as the tsunami in Thailand to the fires in British Columbia, speakers explored the changing role of search and rescue volunteers. Among the international visitors to SARSCENE, the delegation from Taiwan were, perhaps, the most colourful in their red suits. Theirs was one of the most exciting and disturbing sessions, graphically demonstrating their assistance in the aftermath of the tsunami. As volunteers, they pay a fee for the privilege of joining their volunteer team, and they are among the 20,000 SAR volunteers in a country of 23 million people.

Other international perspectives came from delegates and presentations representing the British Virgin Islands, Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England, New Zealand, the United States, Iceland and Taiwan. The evaluations rated this aspect as one of the most valuable components of SARSCENE.

The SARSCENE exhibits are always one of the most exciting places to be. This year, 50 organizations took part, including commercial vendors, government agencies and non-profit organizations.

Because of this year's maritime location, the focus turned to aspects of fishing vessel safety including dangers of old boats, risk factors and trends, attitudes and government regulations. Newfoundland's Memorial University and Virtual Marine Technology demonstrated their simulator to give delegates hands-on experience of launching a lifeboat from an oil rig into rough waters.

While the pre-SARSCENE training courses highlighted the practical aspect of SAR — incident command, lost person searches, canine care and urban SAR and cold water rescue — the SARSCENE sessions focussed on interagency cooperation, interoperability, lessons learned from SAR incidents and investigations and standards and best practices in prevention.

The National Search and Rescue Secretariat presented changes in the way that the SAR New Initiatives Fund will be managed and their impact on project applications. These workshops were well-attended and especially important this year since renewal of the program by the Treasury Board of Canada has brought about some significant new ground rules.

The Canada Labour Code, which is having an impact on both paid and volunteer SAR professionals, was the topic of a presentation from the RCMP, who also participated in the police and volunteer panel discussion, lessons from a major search in Newfoundland and Labrador, and radio communications. Provincial sessions from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba and the Northwest Territories offered a cross-Canada sweep of new developments in

search management and standards.

In all, there were over 60 presentations in a variety of subjects. A new format of 40-minute sessions seemed popular with many of the delegates, and it allowed more flexibility for those speakers who wanted extra time. However, time is always a concern and the format is under review for next year in Gatineau, Quebec.

Experiencing Island Hospitality

This was the first time that SARSCENE had been held in Prince Edward Island. The local hosts, under the direction of Dave Campbell and Barry Folland of the P.E.I. Emergency Management Organization, worked for over a year to ensure its success. Music was a major element in three off-site events. The Canada Remembers Chorus helped SARSCENE pay

tribute to the Year of the Veteran at the Opening Ceremony held at the elegant Confederation Centre for the Arts. The Charlottetown Firehall hosted a lively Meet and Greet with live music by a local band, and more local flavour was on offer at a well-attended social evening at Jake's Kitchen and Bar. Charlottetown proved to be an ideal location, with the island itself as an added attraction.

P.E.I.'s fledgling team takes first place in the SARSCENE Games

by Edward Hitchcock, NSS Games Coordinator

The SAR*SCENE* Games for 2005 were held on a pleasant fall day, Wednesday, October 5, at Victoria Park in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Located alongside

"Que les Jeux commencent — Let the Games begin!"

the waterfront, this 37-acre park has a waterfront boardwalk, plenty of wooded areas and walking trails that made an interesting setting for the Games.

Nine teams of four came from all across Canada and there was even one international team from Ireland. There were six events:

- An evidence search planned by Charlottetown and Montague RCMP members
- A medical emergency event organized by the Canadian Ski Patrol System
- A table top map and compass challenge designed by members of Search and Rescue Saskatchewan Association of Volunteers
- A navigation event run by members of the Newfoundland and Labrador Search and Rescue Association
- A search management event coordinated by Parks Canada employees from a variety of locations, and
- A line throwing and water pumping event organized by the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary.

The winners were the P.E.I. Kings County Ground SAR team made up of participants from around the Charlottetown area who had only been training together a matter of months, but who proved to be formidable opponents. Second place went to the extremely skilled Toronto HUSAR team and third place went to an intrepid team of Parks Canada wardens.

In addition to taking home the Wm. Slaughter SAR*SCENE* Games Cup for the year, the Kings County team also received a special-edition lifejacket for each member. Generously donated by *Nautilus by Protexion*, these custom-fitted jackets are embroidered with "SAR*SCENE* 2005 Champions."

The Games are a massive undertaking by a large number of people, in particular the local SAR*SCENE* hosts who played a key role from city permits to site reclamation.

The dog days of SARSCENE

In addition to presentations on SAR dogs, there was a canine demonstration organized by Dave Walker, the SAR Volunteer Member Coordinator for the City of Hamilton (Ontario) Police Department. After being rained out of the nearby park, an obstacle course was set up in the hotel and the public invited to attend. SAR dogs demonstrated their skills in agility, physical fitness and detection. Some younger members of the audience participated in the demonstration, to the delight of the crowd.

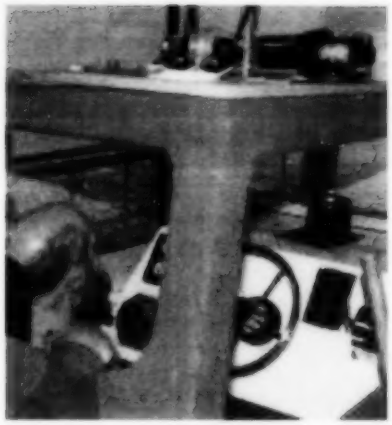
The 2005 K9 Games, organized by Debbie Brewster of Whitehorse District SAR, were held on Saturday morning in Victoria Park. The competition had five stations, including agility, first aid, 'Hollywood Squares,' navigation and drop on recall. Despite the weather, six teams participated in the K9 Games.

Another casualty of the weather was the SAR marine and air demonstration. It was scheduled to take place on Saturday afternoon but had to be cancelled at the last minute because of relentlessly low cloud ceilings. Organized by Captain Chris Healey of the Canadian Forces and Canadian Coast Guard Officer Ray McFadgen, both of the Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre, Halifax, this year's demonstrations had been dedicated to the Year of the Veteran.

Despite the cold and rainy weather, displays of SAR aircraft and equipment from the Canadian Forces, the Canadian Coast Guard and the Charlottetown Fire Department were stationed in Victoria Park on Saturday morning. CFCY and Magic 93, two local radio stations in Charlottetown, broadcast live from Victoria Park all morning. And pouring rain didn't stop some members of the public from coming out to see the Canadian Forces CH-146 Griffon and the Canadian Coast Guard's Messerschmitt B0 105. The pilots chatted with the public and gave them tours of the helicopters.

The PFD celebrity fashion show

Another new feature of this year's workshop was the Personal Flotation Device (PFD) Fashion Show. With fashion supplied by Nautilus by Protexion and Mustang Survival, the models walked down the runway in a variety of PFDs, including jackets, pants and auto-inflatables. The models included the Honourable Elmer MacFadyen, Minister of Community and Cultural Affairs in P.E.I., Deputy Minister Ron MacMillan, RCMP Chief Superintendent Randy Robar, Councillor Philip Brown, two local children and two members of the Canada Games Swim Team.



This year's trade show featured new products, technologies and information from a variety of companies from Canada and the United States. Robert Petitpas, Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, takes a moment to try Virtual Marine Technology Inc.'s lifeboat launch simulator. Inside the mock-up of a lifeboat cockpit, those brave enough to face the 'rolling seas' experienced what it was like to launch a lifeboat from an oil rig into rough waters. The simulator was developed at the Centre for Marine Simulation, Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland.

The 2005 SAR Awards

The following people received Certificates of Achievement for their commitment to search and rescue in their communities.

Lloyd Freese is a senior park warden at Kluane National Park and Reserve in the Yukon and was lead park warden in public safety for two decades. His dedication and skill in rescue have been recognized with two Honorary Testimonials from the Royal Canadian Humane Association and two Parks Canada Awards of Excellence.

Through hard work, dedication and vision, **Douglas Popowich** transformed the Manitoba Ground SAR Program into a well-organized network of highly trained volunteer teams. The program has now trained over 1,000 volunteers. He also improved SAR response in remote areas by training and equipping volunteer teams within each of the eight tribal council areas of Manitoba.

Peter Spear has been a member of the Canadian Ski Patrol Service for four decades and has promoted avalanche safety since the 1960s, when he was co-developer of an avalanche awareness program. This program, taught by Mr. Spear for more than 30 years, formed the basis of the Canadian Avalanche Association's current course — the industry standard.

Rick Staley has been dedicated to SAR for 25 years, primarily at Kluane National Park and Reserve. A park warden at Kluane, Mr. Staley dedicates considerable volunteer time to safety education. He has been recognized twice with honorary testimonials from the Royal Canada Humane Association, and twice with Parks Canada Awards of Excellence.

A founding member of the Porcupine Area SAR Institute, **Horace Webb** anticipated the importance of an organized, trained group of search and rescue volunteers. He has supported several initiatives to improve ground SAR response in Ontario and has helped strengthen relations between SAR volunteers and the Ontario Provincial Police.

Constable Colin Wiebe has been a dedicated Central Fraser Valley SAR volunteer since 1993. He volunteers more than 1,000 hours each year and improves his skills by taking almost every SAR course offered by B.C.'s Justice Institute. Among many contributions, he implemented a new Operations Guidelines Manual and rewrote the constitution and bylaws.

BARRY NASH of Stephenville Crossing, Newfoundland and Labrador, received the 2005 Outstanding SAR Achievement Award for his hard work and dedication in the Newfoundland SAR community for the past 22 years.

The award was presented to Mr. Nash by Jean Murray, Executive Director of the National Search and Rescue Secretariat, on behalf of the Lead Minister for Search and Rescue, the Honourable Bill Graham, at the SAR*SCENE* 2005 awards banquet.

As coordinator of the Barachois SAR team for the past 15 years, Mr. Nash has shown exceptional leadership, making his team one of the most highly respected in the province. As well, he has generously shared his expertise with other teams across the province. ■

Exercise Ocean Guardian II promotes inter-agency cooperation

Off the Burin Peninsula, Newfoundland and Labrador, an explosion occurs on a passenger ferry. It causes severe damage to the vessel, several passengers to be injured, many more to be blown overboard and others to evacuate into lifeboats. A situation like this would test the response capabilities of nearby SAR resources.

And it did. This scenario occurred on the second day of a two-day, multi-agency security and SAR exercise in September 2005 called *Ocean Guardian II*. The security element of the scenario was carried out on the first day and involved terrorists, who were detained on a ferry by the RCMP, and their associates, who had detonated a car bomb in the town of Fortune, NL. On the second day, the bomb exploded on the ferry and SAR resources were thrown into action.

The exercise was funded in part by the Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund (SAR NIF) to foster inter-agency cooperation as well as to test and evaluate the provincial and municipal emergency response plans in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Not only did the exercise involve municipal, provincial, federal and volunteer groups in Canada, but representatives from France also participated in the scenario. In fact, the first vessel on scene was the *Fulmar*, a French patrol vessel from the Gendarmeries Maritimes.

Lessons Learned

According to Derek Smith of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (and former Senior Analyst at the National Search and Rescue Secretariat), cooperation among the participants was remarkable, but there were many lessons learned:

- Keeping survivors informed of the evacuation plan, because those who are not injured can feel abandoned and ignored while rescuers attend to the injured
- Using the most efficient rescue equipment and vessels
- Ensuring effective security control in the survivor reception area. Without this, survivors can walk out — meaning they may not yet be accounted for — and speak to waiting media.

"It was an excellent test of the emergency and rescue organizations in the Burin Peninsula area and in wider Newfoundland and Labrador," Mr. Smith said. "This was the best multi-agency exercise I have witnessed in Canada during the past two years."

NIF project number: **DFO 4/05** ■

Authorities and Agencies Involved in Ocean Guardian II

- Canadian Coast Guard
- Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary
- Canadian Forces
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Affaires Maritimes, St Pierre et Miquelon (France)
- Société National de Sauvetage en Mer
- Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada
- Canada Border Services Agency
- Town of Fortune Municipal Authorities (Civic/Fire/Paramedic/Police)
- Town of Grand Bank Municipal Authorities (Civic/Fire/Paramedic/Police)
- Town of Marystown Municipal Authorities
- Newfoundland and Labrador Emergency Measures Organization
- Canadian Red Cross
- The Salvation Army
- Peninsula Health Care Corporation
- St Pierre - Fortune Ferry Company

SAR-BQ 2005 strengthens links between coastal rescue teams

by Marie-Dominic Breault

Christian Émond, host of SAR-BQ 2004, communicated his dream to unite all nautical responders in one great team. Carl Marois and Caroline Villeneuve took the lead in organizing the 2005 event.

This year, the event took place on June 29 at the Marina de Saurel (Québec). Amongst participants, there were members from the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Student Program of the Canadian Coast Guard and the Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons, paramedics, fire fighters, members of the Sûreté du Québec, representatives from the Office of Boating Safety, and from QIT-Fer and Titane Inc. Also, for the first year businesses like Mustang Survival, Nautilus by Protexion, Équipement Médical Rive-Nord et Garmin were invited to attend.

First, each group of stakeholders presented itself, briefly stating their role in the jurisdiction and their human and material resources. Mr. André Audet followed with a presentation on the role of the On Scene Commander (OSC) during missions where several rescue teams are interacting.

This year's SAR-BQ was a real success. Once again, it was a great opportunity for the stakeholders to get closer; they now know each other better and mingle more freely. Incidentally, the presentation on OSC was the pivotal moment of this multidisciplinary meeting; it oriented the participants towards a common work approach that is most effective. To top it off, the few businesses attending the event had prepared a surprise demonstration of the efficacy of lifejackets, and wet and dry suits in the marina.

The SAR-BQ 2005 event has strengthened the links and enhanced confidence between coastal rescue teams, giving birth to a true partnership. ■

Marie Dominic Breault is a crew member of the Student Coastal Rescue Program.

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Search and Rescue

Directory?

With over 600 organizations and teams, the Canadian Search and Rescue Directory is the most complete listing in Canada. To add your name to the Directory, go to **www.nss.gc.ca**

Click on **Directory of Cdn. SAR Organizations**. The directory is now searchable by region.

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Increased knowledge for safety on the water and greater

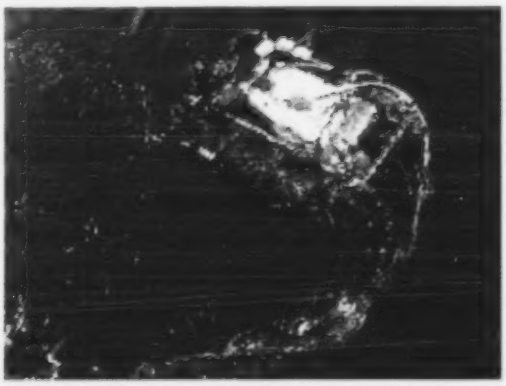
The following projects are supported by the Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund.

Laser Underwater Camera takes SAR to new depths

After 10 years in the making, the Laser Underwater Camera Image Enhancer (*LUCIE*) is now available on the market under the name *Sea Surveyor*.

Developed in the 1990s by Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) Valcartier and funded by the Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund (SAR NIF), *LUCIE* takes underwater investigation and security to the next level.

LUCIE can identify targets at up to five times greater distances than conventional cameras. As well, its imaging system is able to focus on light reflected from objects a specific distance away, while filtering out light reflected from particles in suspension.



This phenomenon, called backscattering, is found in conventional cameras and makes searching for, and focusing on, articles underwater more difficult. It is estimated that *LUCIE* will reduce search times by a factor of 10.

LUCIE can be transported aboard small surface boats and used in remotely operated vehicles.

The camera is marketed by D-Fense Ltée and will be used primarily for SAR operations and undersea security operations.

DND 2/01 ■

Safe Catch helps to make fishing a safer occupation

According to an occupational health and safety report, fishing is the most dangerous occupation in Newfoundland and Labrador. And it is getting more dangerous with each passing year.

Over the past 10 years, the rates of reported injuries and fatalities have increased by nearly 100 per cent and the number of SAR incidents has nearly doubled.

To combat this growing problem, researchers at Memorial University of Newfoundland proposed an inter-disciplinary research project called *Safe Catch*, to reduce the number and severity of injuries, fatalities and SAR incidents in the fish harvesting industry.

Funded by the Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund (SAR NIF) and the Canadian Institutes for Health Research, this community safety project identified and interpreted the factors that influence the occupational health and safety of fish harvesters. This data will be used to develop prevention programs, facilitate the planning and delivery of SAR and other services, and improve fishing safety policy.

Through six linked studies on fishing safety, *Safe Catch* will identify conditions and events surrounding accidents and near-misses. By applying this knowledge to policy and behavioural changes, the program aims to decrease the number and severity of injuries, fatalities and SAR incidents.

Safe Catch uses arts and entertainment as one of several ways to deliver the messages in the community. In one community, organizers began the project with an inter-denominational church service. For the second event, a local songwriter composed a song about safety at sea with lyrics derived from interviews with local fish harvesters. The third event involved school children singing about safety at sea.

DFO 2/03 ■

capacity to search at night, on the ground and underwater

Vernon SAR increases its rescue capacity

The 60-plus members of the Vernon SAR team in British Columbia cover an area greater than 7,800 sq. km, some of it covered in snow for 10 to 12 months of the year. This area is about one quarter larger than the size of Prince Edward Island.

With such a large area, and a growing population of extreme recreationalists, the group's NIF proposal demonstrated increased high-level training and proper equipment for both day and night searches were needed to decrease the length of searches and, in the end, save more lives.

Through funding from the Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund (SAR NIF), Vernon SAR will equip eight ground SAR teams with rescue equipment by 2007; select specific team members to become trained in avalanche awareness, who will then train other team members; and, increase public awareness with a Vernon SAR Educational Video and other multi-media products.

BC 9/04 ■

Chatham-Kent Police builds night-searching skills

Ontario's Chatham-Kent Police Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) is responsible for search and rescue in its 2,543 sq. km. municipality, most of which is rural.

The project increases CIRT's night search capabilities and improves poor visibility with thermal imaging equipment in combination with aerial support and global positioning satellite (GPS) technology.

Members of CIRT are equipped with a hand-held thermal imaging camera and GPS units to assist them in their ground searches. As well, a local helicopter service is contracted to assist, especially when large areas need to be searched in little time.

In late 2004, CIRT members held a mock SAR incident to practice searching the ground from the air in a helicopter, as well as using the thermal imager and GPS units.

ON 3/04 ■

Inter-agency training improves Manitoba's SAR response

Each year in Manitoba there are approximately six to 10 SAR incidents that require a full provincial response. This means that teams who don't usually work together must come together to provide an efficient SAR response.

With approximately 26 volunteer teams in the province, as well as other federal and provincial partners, the ability to work together is important. And to do so, training together is a must.

Sponsored by the Office of the Manitoba Fire Commissioner and funded by the Search and Rescue New Initiatives Fund (SAR NIF), the project will provide each of the SAR partners in Manitoba an opportunity to train together.

Each year, from 2004-05 through to 2006-07, a provincial exercise will be held in a different part of the province in an effort to make the exercises accessible to volunteer teams across Manitoba.

Not only will the teams be able to train together, but will improve their use of Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping systems, hand-held thermal imaging cameras and forward looking infra-red (FLIR) capabilities.

A critical component of the project will provide the teams with winter rescue and survival skills training for the harsh Manitoba winters.

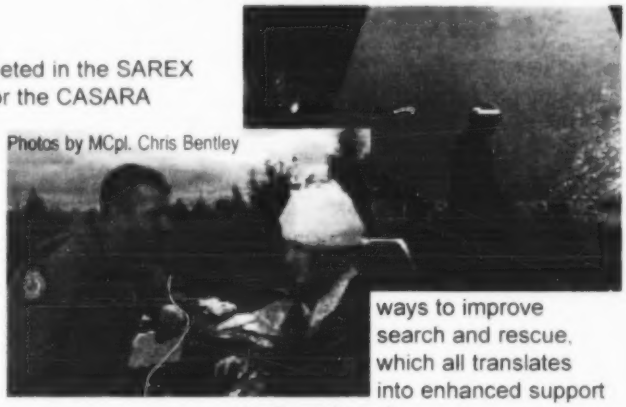
MB 1/04 ■

SAREX 2005 helps improve SAR in Canada

Hosted by 14 Wing Greenwood, the 2005 four-day Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX) allowed participants to test their skills, equipment and ideas.

Held in late September in Summerside, Prince Edward Island, 16 teams from the Canadian Forces participated in the following events: parachuting accuracy, medical, search, rescue, maintenance, bell ringer (a precision parachuting event for experienced SAR Techs 40 years old and older) and a fixed-wing marine event. These events ensure standardization in techniques and procedures related to SAR.

Because search and rescue is a cooperative effort, SAREX incorporated the Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA), with whom the Canadian Forces work very closely. Nine teams from CASARA competed in the SAREX search event for the CASARA National SAR Excellence Award.



Photos by MCpl. Chris Bentley

The focus of the SAREX is to develop rescue cooperation, test alerting and notification systems, and cross-train in rescue procedures and techniques in case of a large-scale SAR operation. It is hosted by a different squadron each year and was held in Comox, B.C. last year.

Colonel Perry Matte, Commander 14 Wing Greenwood and Officer Commanding SAREX 2005, said, "This is a very important opportunity for the SAR community to train together, exchange best practices and experiences as well as discuss ways to improve search and rescue, which all translates into enhanced support to Canadians."

But SAREX is more than a friendly competition among both CASARA teams and Canadian Forces teams, it is a chance for the Officers in Charge of the Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centres, the SAR Squadron Commanders and others to come together face-to-face and discuss any SAR-related issues.

For more information about SAREX 2005, visit **www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/14wing/news/releases_e.asp**

The winners of 11 National Defence trophies and one CASARA trophy are:

- Team Spirit Award: 413 Transport and Rescue Squadron, Greenwood, NS
- Search and Rescue Trophy: 424 Squadron, Trenton, ON, Sgt. Cattell, Cpl. Duchesneau and MCpl. Hood
- Parachute Association Honour Roll: Combat Service Support Sgt. Bedard, Sgt. Moquin and Sgt. MacKinnon
- Allison Trophy: 435 Squadron Sgt. Cooper, MCpl. Decaire and MCpl. Guay, Winnipeg, MB
- Leslie L. Irvin Trophy: Sgt. Dave Cooper, 435 Squadron, Winnipeg, MB
- Sullivan Trophy: Combat Service Support Sgt. Bedard, Sgt. Moquin and Sgt. MacKinnon
- Maintenance Trophy: 413 Transport and Rescue Squadron, Greenwood, NS
- Diamond Trophy: Combat Service Support Sgt. Bedard, Sgt. Moquin and Sgt. MacKinnon
- SAR Tech of the Year Award: Sgt. Jason MacKinnon of 444 Combat Support Squadron, Goose Bay, NL
- Over 40 trophy (Bell Ringer): Warrant Officer Moroni
- CASARA National SAR Excellence Award: Yarmouth, NS CASARA Team

A Cormorant Trophy for helicopter rescue was presented to Capt. Steve Reid, Capt. Bob Charest, Flight Engineers MCpl. Dave Pawulski and Cpl. Brad Lawrence, SAR Techs Warrant Officer Tim Eagle, Sgt. Steve Bedard and MCpl. Dan Villeneuve from 413 Transport and Rescue Squadron in Greenwood, NS.

The trophy recognizes a "Canadian civilian, government or military crew that has performed the most demanding helicopter rescue of the year."

Arctic SAREX increases interoperability among three countries

Approximately 230 people from Canada, the United States and Russia tested their search and rescue skills in Arctic SAREX this past September.

Hosted by the United States, the 11th annual tri-national search and rescue exercise allowed the three Arctic nations to share expertise on SAR procedures and capabilities and improve interoperability in case a combined effort is necessary.

"Arctic SAREX is an example of increased interoperability between the three countries responsible for conducting SAR operations in the Arctic," said Major-General Charlie Bouchard, Commander of 1 Canadian Air Division/Canadian NORAD Region.

"Continually comparing and improving our skills enhances our ability to operate together on humanitarian missions such as search and rescue," he explained.

Next year's Arctic SAREX will be hosted by Canada in Comox, B.C.

The Canadian contingent included:

- 442 Squadron, Comox, B.C.
- 424 Squadron, Trenton, ON
- 413 Squadron, Greenwood, NS
- 435 Squadron, Winnipeg, MB, and
- 1 Canadian Air Division Headquarters.

For more information, go to **www.airforce.forces.gc.ca/news/2005/09/26_e.asp**

Teams respond to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

This past September, two members of Edmonton Regional Search and Rescue, and one from Community Emergency Response Team - Northwest Territories (CERT-NWT), flew to Gulfport, Mississippi to help with relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina, and again to Texas after Hurricane Rita.

by Brandie Howey

Bob Davies and Daryl Black, both of ERSARA along with Tony Clarke from CERT-NWT, went to the area as 'Team Canada' at the request of World Wide Disaster Relief, based in Texas. Due to their advanced medical knowledge and training in technical rescue, the three members of Team Canada were well prepared to deal with the chaotic and uncertain situations following Hurricane Katrina.

After a rocky start to the mission where flights were promised and then rescinded, Mr. Black, Mr. Davies and Mr. Clarke decided to use their personal air miles to begin their mission. For the five days, the three-man team was assigned to act as the medical component for a U.S. National Guard unit. As such, they worked in areas consisting mainly of government housing.

Pathfinder missions

In these vast complexes, residents were either physically unable to evacuate or did not have the resources to do so and were forced to endure the storm. They had not had outside contact since the hurricane hit. These were called 'Pathfinder' missions: literally going door-to-door, breaching where necessary, and asking if the residents inside needed medical attention, medicine, or help in any way. The team had to evacuate a number of people, most of whom had not been able to see a doctor, call for an ambulance, or get transportation to any medical facility. As it turned out, the communications equipment Mr. Black brought from ERSARA was the only kind in their Pathfinder mission, including the National Guard units to which they were assigned.

The residents in this area of Gulfport, Mississippi, had to cope with flooding, structural damage, loss of power and communications. Mr. Black recalls one area where residents of a building complex had used a pool to deal with the lack of running water. "Young boys were wheeling buckets of human waste to the pool where they would empty them into the water. It was not a pleasant thing to see."

There were many challenges the team faced while completing their mission. First, the extreme 40-45 degree Celsius heat was a factor in medical emergencies, including those involving fellow workers. Second, the need for the team to be completely self-sufficient was extremely important. This meant bringing their own food and water, as well as dealing with waste. There were no hotels available, so they slept under the stars each night, usually by the side of the road near their vehicle.

"Improvising was a necessity," said Mr. Davies. "We had to make sure we weren't going down there as a burden to an already strained relief effort; we made sure we had everything we needed to take care of ourselves 100 per cent."

Hurricane Rita

For Hurricane Rita, which hit just days after Katrina, things were different. Mr. Black, who had returned from responding to Hurricane Katrina a week before, answered the mutual aid request once again along with Jim Martin of CERT-NWT and Jay O'Connor, an emergency planner from Manitoba. The air miles were donated this time by a Sutherland Drugs store in Yellowknife.

At one point during the 10-day mission, they were driving at night along a single lane road to reach a town that needed assistance.

"There were literally hundreds of alligators along the sides of the road," Mr. Black explained. "Their eyes look like red marbles in the headlights. They even scurried across the road along with the snakes."

Following search and rescue operations throughout the southeast of Texas and parts of Louisiana, the team moved to Deweyville, in southeast Texas. There they operated the ambulance service, giving the extremely overworked local EMS a break.

'Canadian Medics'

In fact, this resulted in the team being on-call for 115 hours straight, during which time they responded to various calls ranging from an accident involving a 10 year-old on a four-wheeler to elderly patients with shortness of breath. Due to the team's bright orange pants and

outgoing personalities, Mr. Black said, everyone in the town and hospital knew them.

"As we pulled up in the unit, the nurses and doctors in the hospital would say 'here come the Canadian Medics!' Near the end of our deployment they even took pictures," he added.

An elderly woman named Cora provided one of the mission's most emotional and fond memories. Cora was transported to the hospital because of a severe respiratory infection. Later, her husband tracked down the rescuers for a tearful reunion where she called them her 'angels' for saving her life.

These 'Canadian Medics' answered the call by selflessly using their own resources, training and talents for people hundreds of miles away who were in desperate and immediate need. ■

Brandie Howey is a long-time member of the Edmonton Regional SAR Association.

Propelled into action

The hurricanes in the southern United States propelled Canadians into action, especially the search and rescue personnel — paid and unpaid — able to help out.

Harry Blackmore, President of the Search and Rescue Volunteer Association of Canada (SARVAC), was asked by the regional Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada office to find volunteers willing to help in the hardest hit areas. Around 650 volunteers came forward from all across Canada, although in the end, they did not need to be deployed.

Vancouver's Urban SAR response

The Vancouver Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team also assisted in the disaster. Shortly after Hurricane Katrina hit, Tim Armstrong of Vancouver USAR was asked if his team was ready to respond.

Over the next 12 hours, Mr. Armstrong gathered 15,000 lbs of equipment and 46 rescue specialists.

For the next six days, Mr. Armstrong and other members of the team worked 18 to 20 hours per day in Chalmette, LA, one of the hardest hit areas.

"It is crucial that teams are able to be totally self-sufficient," explained Mr. Armstrong.

While in Louisiana, the team discovered that all forms of modern communication were not working and the satellite phones had limitations. As well, given the conditions and desperation of citizens, it was often dangerous for first responders to operate in the area. Because the team was working in conjunction with the state police, armed officers were assigned to the members for protection.

"The actual rescue efforts are a very small piece of the overall deployment," Mr. Armstrong said. "Team safety, movement and accountability become the biggest challenges."

Canadian Forces and Canadian Coast Guard

As well, three Navy ships and one Canadian Coast Guard ship, joined by several Sea King helicopters, went to the Gulf Coast in September with emergency supplies. The 1,000 Canadian Forces and Coast Guard personnel brought clean water, tents, cots, body bags, assault boats, lumber, pollution clean-up equipment, bug spray, diapers and baby wipes.

Canadian Navy divers from Halifax, N.S. and Esquimalt, B.C. were tasked to help their American counterparts clear navigational hazards such as loose barges and inspect damaged levees.

Parks Canada and North Shore Rescue use new avalanche rescue system

by Dan Kostrzewski

Parks Canada's Mountain Safety Program and North Shore Rescue have integrated the *Recco* Avalanche Rescue System into their rescue response plans.

Although the two organizations are structured differently — one volunteer and the other government — each shoulders a heavy responsibility for some of the most highly trafficked backcountry zones in Canada. Statistically, both operations average close to 300 rescues a year in rugged, mountainous and avalanche-prone terrain.

Recco is a small, electronic device used to help locate avalanche victims. *Recco* pinpoints a victim's precise location using harmonic radar. The two-part system consists of a *Recco* detector used by organized rescue groups, and *Recco* reflectors that are integrated into clothing or gear.

"More and more people are skiing with this type of device now," said Tim Jones, manager of North Shore Rescue. "Anything that can make it easier to find somebody makes it easier on us — that's the bottom line."

"The fact that most of our responses would also involve using a helicopter and that *Recco* is very small, very light and very easy to use, means that it's a piece of rescue equipment that will be taken to a rescue scene," explained Gord Irwin, Mountain Safety Program manager for Banff, Yoho, and Kootenay National Parks.

"The other benefit is that if the rescue is not helicopter-assisted, it still comes down to it's small and it's light, so it is easily transported to a rescue scene and is a tool that actually will be taken immediately."

"With very minimal cost on the part of skiers, they can have something in their clothing or equipment that would enable a rescue group to find them," Irwin said.

"Now, I still don't think it's a substitute for self-rescue, but certainly from the point of view of a rescue team it will greatly decrease the amount of time that we would be in a search, particularly for the people who don't have beacons and therefore it minimizes the risk and exposure time of the rescue team. But more importantly, it enhances the chances of survival for someone who is caught in an avalanche." ■

Dan Kostrzewksi is a writer and a teacher for recreational avalanche courses at Washington's Mt. Baker's Mountain Education Center, and works with Recco.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sensors for Sovereignty, Security and Search and Rescue
February 22-23, 2006, Ottawa, Ontario
Todd.Macuda@nrc.ca

2006 International Boating and Water Safety Summit
April 30-May 3, 2006
Palm Harbor, Florida
www.safeboatingcouncil.org/summit/summitmain.htm

Washington State SAR Conference 2006
May 19-21, 2006
Enumclaw, Washington
www.wasar2006.org/

International Association for Safety and Survival Training Meeting and International Conference
May 22, 2006, Sydney, Nova Scotia
rossmx@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR) Conference 06
May 24-27, 2006, Austin, Texas
www.nasar.org/nasar/conferences.php?id=139

SAR*SCENE* 2006
October 4-7, 2006
Gatineau, Québec
Toll free: 1-800-727-9414

Rescue 2006
October 20-22, 2006
Reykjavik, Iceland
www.landsbjorg.is/english/rescue/index.html

ISAR 2006
October 27-28, 2006
Portsmouth, Virginia
www.ccga-gcac.com/home/home_e.asp

ISAR 2007
October 25-30, 2007
Toronto, Ontario
www.ccga-gcac.com/home/home_e.asp

For a complete list, visit *www.nss.gc.ca* and click on **Events**.